

#### **IV. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine comprising:

one or more trading cards, each trading card having a substrate layer, a coloring layer laminated onto the substrate layer and a re-writable layer laminated onto the coloring layer;

a data reading unit for reading character data from the one or more at least two inserted trading cards which are inserted into the data reading unit by a player, each trading card storing a set of character data;

an advancing unit for advancing a game based on the read character data;

a combining unit for combining at least two sets of character data when a first predetermined condition is satisfied in the advanced game;

a determining unit for determining at least one set of character data of a reward trading card based on the combined character data; and

a payout unit for paying out the reward trading card to the player, the reward trading card storing~~which stores~~ the determine set of character data,

wherein, when each trading card is heated to a specified temperature, the re-writable layer becomes transparent and the coloring layer becomes blackened and, when the transparent layer and the blackened coloring layer is irradiated with a specified light pattern, the re-writable layer is selectively made non-transparent and the specified light pattern is illustrated on the trading card.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the payout unit includes writing unit for writing the determine set of character data in the reward trading card.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the set of character data includes capability and attribute values.

6. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein the payout unit includes printing unit for printing an image of the determined set of character data on a surface of the reward trading card.

7. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine comprising:  
one or more trading cards, each trading card having a substrate layer, a coloring layer laminated onto the substrate layer and a re-writable layer laminated onto the coloring layer;  
three slots into which ~~two or three~~ one or more trading cards can be inserted by a player, each trading card storing a set of character data;  
a card reader which reads a set of character data from the inserted trading card;  
an advancing device which advances a game based on the read character data;  
a combining device which combines at least two sets of character data, when a prescribed condition is satisfied in the advanced game;  
a determining device which determines at least one set of character data of a reward trading card; and  
a payout device which pays out the reward trading card to the player, the reward trading card storing the determined set of character data; and  
a printing unit for heating at least one trading card to a specified temperature thereby causing the re-writable layer to become transparent and the coloring layer to become blackened and, for irradiating a specified light pattern onto the transparent layer and the blackened coloring layer thereby causing the re-writable layer to be selectively made non-transparent and the specified light pattern to be illustrated on the at least one trading card.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling a gaming machine, comprising steps of:

providing one or more trading cards;

insert the one or more trading cards into the gaming machine;

reading character data from the one or more ~~at least two~~-inserted trading cards, each trading card storing a set of character data and having a unique image printed thereon;

advancing a game based on the read character data;

receiving an instruction of combining the character data, when a first prescribed condition is satisfied in the advanced game;

combining at least two sets of character data in response to the instructions;

determining at least one set of character data of a reward trading card based on the combined character data; and

writing the set of updated character data to memory of the reward trading card; and

paying out the reward trading card storing a set of character data, which is based on the read character data according to the status of the game.

10. (Previously Presented) The method for controlling the gaming machine according to claim 9, further comprising steps of:

changing the character data based on results of the game.

11. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine comprising:

one or more trading cards, each one of the one or more trading cards storing a unique set of character data and having a unique image portrayed thereon;

three slots into which the one or more ~~at least two~~-trading cards can be inserted by a player, ~~each of the trading card storing a set of character data;~~

a card reader which reads character data from the inserted trading cards;

a payout device for paying out a reward trading card storing a set of character data, which is based on the read character data according to the status of the game;  
and

a controller which executes a predetermined computer program, the controller being connected to the card reader and the payout device,

wherein the controller causes the card reader to read the character data, advances a game based on the read character data, combines at least two sets of character data when a first predetermined condition is satisfied in the advanced game, determines the set of character data of the reward trading card based on the combined character data, and causes the payout device to pay out the reward trading card which stores the determined set of character data.

12. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, further comprising

a changing unit for changing a number of combining set and a number of determining set in response to proceedings of the game.

13. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, further comprising

a generating unit for generating a set of character data when a second predetermined condition is satisfied in the advanced game, wherein

the determining unit determines one set of character data of a reward trading card based on the second predetermined condition, and

the payout unit pays out the reward trading card storing the determined set of character data.

14. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein

the combining unit combines the entirety of the read character data, and

the determining unit determines the entirety of the rewarded character data based on the combined character data.

15. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein  
the combining unit combines the entirety of the read character data, and  
the determining unit determines a part of the rewarded character data based on the combined character data.

16. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein  
the combining unit combines a part of the read character data, and  
the determining unit determines the entirety of the rewarded character data based on the combined character data.

17. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, wherein  
the combining unit combines a part of the read character data, and  
the determining unit determines a part of the rewarded character data based on the character data.

18. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine according to claim 1, further comprising  
an updating unit for updating the character data based on the results of the game.